

Beauties of the Truth

A Forum for the Publication of Scriptural Viewpoints
Thought to be Harmonious with God's Plan of the Ages
Volume 20, Number 2, May 2009

Two Trees

"Who in his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24).

In studying the teachings of the Old Testament, we learn from them, sometimes by way of contrast, and sometimes by way of comparison.

A striking illustration of this fact is found in Genesis 2:9, "And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the Tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the Tree of knowledge of good and evil."

And in Acts 5:30, "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a Tree."

And in 1 Peter 2:24, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the Tree."

Being of an inquiring mind, we ask, Why should the cross of our Lord be spoken of as a Tree? Surely there must be some deeper meaning than that which appears on the surface. Could it be that the deeper meaning, suggested to us by the holy Spirit, was to go back to Genesis 2:9, and compare and contrast, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and the Tree on which our Lord was crucified?

CONTRASTS

(1) We look first at the points of contrast. We note that the First Tree was planted by God. "And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden ... out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree" (Genesis 2:9). But the second tree, the tree to which our Lord was nailed, was planted by man. It was human hands which devised, provided, and erected that cruel tree on the hill of Calvary.

(2) The first Tree was pleasant to the eyes. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof" (Genesis 3:6). Just what this "pleasantness" consisted of we do not know. But the record seems to indicate that this tree was an object of beauty and a delight.

What a contrast from the second Tree! Here everything was hideous and repellent! The suffering Savior, the vulgar

crowd, the taunting priests, the two thieves, the flowing blood, the hours of darkness (Matthew 27:45). Nothing was here to please the eye.

The first Tree was "pleasant to the eyes." But concerning the one on the second Tree, it is written, "They saw in him no beauty that they should desire him. For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him" (Isaiah 53:2).

(3) We see that God forbade man to eat of the first Tree. "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17). A Divine prohibition was placed upon the fruit of this tree. But again, how different from the second Tree! How startling the contrast. There is no restriction here. In this case man is freely invited to draw near and eat of the fruit of this tree! The sinner is bidden to "Taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalms 34:8). God says, "I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage" (Matthew 22:4). All of this refers to the nourishing blessings which come to us from our Savior who died on the second Tree. For we are comparing that fruit which hung on the trees; a comparison of the fruit on the tree of knowledge with Jesus, as the fruit that hung on the cross.

Because God forbade man to eat of the first Tree, Satan uses all of his powers to get men to eat of it. Contrariwise,

IN THIS ISSUE

<i>Two Trees</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Double Numbers</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Tyre and Sidon</i>	<i>5</i>

BEAUTIES OF THE TRUTH is published as a service to the brethren to stimulate their appreciation of the riches of God's Word. It is published free of charge. Subscriptions will be entered for all requestors. Address: Beauties of the Truth, 6748 Breckenridge, Lisle, IL 60532. Editorial Board: Brothers Richard Doctor (Managing Editor), O. B. Elbert, Raymond Luke, David Rice, Tom Ruggirello, David Stein, Richard Suraci. See us online at www.BeautiesoftheTruth.org

because God now invites men to eat of the second Tree, Satan uses all his powers to prevent men eating of it. Is not this another contrast marked out for us by the holy Spirit? Through eating of the first Tree, the curse descended upon our race with all its attendant miseries. But by eating of the second Tree comes life and salvation. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). As by the act of "eating" man lost his life, so now by an act of "eating" man obtains life. In John 6:54 Jesus said, "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day."

(4) Adam, through eating of the first Tree, was cast out of Paradise. While on the cross, our Lord said to the thief, Thou shalt be remembered by me in my kingdom, it will be paradise, when it is established. Because I have provided the ransom price for you and the other thief and for all men, you shall be admitted to Paradise!

RESEMBLANCE

Considering points of resemblance between the two Trees, we observe the following.

(1) **Garden.** Both trees pertain to a garden. The first Tree was in the garden of Eden. The second Tree was by a garden which is unnamed. "Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid" (John 19:41). Is it possible that we are told this, for the reason that we should connect the two trees? Is there a striking point of analogy, that both the death sentence on the first Adam, and the death resting place of the last Adam, are in a Garden?

In connection with both Trees we find the words "in the midst." "The Tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil" (Genesis 2:9). The word "and" connects the two trees together and intimates their position in the midst of the garden. In like manner we also read concerning our Savior, "They crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst" (John 19:18).

(2) **Thorns.** Part of the curse upon Adam was "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded ... thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee" (Genesis 3:17, 18). As Jesus hung upon the second Tree, he wore a crown of thorns, which reminds us that this part of the curse as well would be removed by our Lord's suffering and death.

DOUBLE CONDEMNATION

Our thoughts turn to Galatians 3:13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a Tree.'" Jesus had to die on the cross in order to redeem Israel, for the Law stipulated that the worst offenders would hang on a Tree (Deuteronomy 21:22).



Jesus, who died on a Tree for our sins

Here is a comment from Studies in the Scriptures (Volume 5, page 430), "Christians who had been Jews and had therefore been under the Law Covenant, had not only been purchased from under its sentence, but were also released from its dominion."

It is not that the Law was evil, but that, because of imperfections of the flesh, the Israelites violated its commands, and therefore came under the condemnation of the Law. "I was alive without the Law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death" (Romans 7: 9, 10).

Thus the Jews needed to be specially redeemed from that curse as well. Three things were required for this. (a) Jesus had to be a perfect man, an "anti-lutron" or corresponding price, equal to Adam. (b) This man must be a willing sacrifice, and a Jew obedient to the Law. (c) And he must be hanged upon a Tree, which he was by virtue of his crucifixion.

CROSS AND TREE

There are many prophecies in the Old Testament concerning our Lord's suffering and death on the cross. Isaiah 53 is one of the more prominent of these. None say specifically that Jesus would be crucified upon a tree. However, Psalms 22:16 says something which is uniquely compatible with his crucifixion. "For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet." You do not pierce hands and feet if you intend to stone a prisoner. So it may be reasonably inferred that this text indicates Jesus would be crucified, and not stoned to death.

Psalms 34:20 suggests the same. "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken." This is consistent with crucifixion, but not as well with stoning.

The Jewish nation needed something more than the rest of mankind. For them it was necessary that Jesus, a Jew under the Law, meet the Law's extreme limits. He must hang from a tree.

Several scriptures come to mind regarding the Cross and the Tree. So to confirm our thoughts that using the words Cross and Tree are synonymous, we refer to Acts 5:30, "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged

on a Tree.” Here the Greek word for Tree is *xulon* (Strong’s Concordance word number 3586). This is so also in the texts following.

“We are witnesses of all thing which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a Tree [*xulon*]” (Acts 10:39).

“When they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the Tree [*xulon*] and laid him in a sepulchre” (Acts 13:29).

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the Tree [*xulon*]” (1 Peter 2:24).

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree [*xulon*] of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God” (Revelation 2:7).

“In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the Tree [*xulon*] of life and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations” (Revelation 22:14).

“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the Tree [*xulon*] of life and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Revelation 22:14).

The word Tree or Trees is used literally hundreds of times in the Old Testament and the New. The word for a literal growing tree in the Greek is *dendron* (Strong’s 1186). Christ was not hung upon a literal tree. He was hung upon a cross. The word for cross in the Greek is *stauros*. So why did the writers in the New Testament use a completely different word, *xulon*, when referring to the cross, as they have in the examples listed above?

A noted Messianic Jewish believer, Dr. David H. Stern, sums it up best. “Jesus was not hanged on a Tree, but on a *stauros* (Strong’s 4716), a cross. The word *xulon* was used instead of *stauros* in these different places because all of them quote or allude to Deuteronomy 21:22, 23, where the Hebrew word *etz* (Strong’s 6086) is normally rendered into the Septuagint Greek as *xulon*. Both Hebrew *etz* and Greek *xulon* can mean tree, wood, stake, etc., depending on the context. If Luke had meant a tree and not a stake, the Greeks had a word for it, *dendron*, which he could have used, but did not.”¹

ABRAHAM

When Abraham received three angelic visitors in the plains of Mamre, “he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, and said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the Tree” (Genesis 18:2-4).

How suggestive are the last words of this quotation. Why should we be told that Abraham invited his three visitors to rest “under the tree,” unless there is some typical meaning to his words? The Tree, we have seen, speaks of the cross of Christ, and it is there that “rest” is to be found.

Verse eight of the passage says, “And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them, and he stood by them under the Tree, and they did

eat” (Genesis 18:8). Eating was an act of fellowship, here and elsewhere in Scripture. It is the cross of Christ which is the basis of our fellowship with God. How striking, too, is the order. First resting under the Tree, then eating, or fellowship.



Waters of Marah, sweetened

SWEETENING THE WATERS

“And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter ... and [Moses] cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet” (Exodus 15:23-25). Comment is almost needless, the type is so apparent. Here again, the Tree typifies the cross of Christ and it was our Lord who, by going down into death, sweetened the bitter waters for us.

The Jews tradition is that the wood of this tree was itself bitter.² Yet it sweetened the waters of Marah, as the bitterness of Christ’s sufferings and death sweetens the memory of his sacrifice.

Furthermore, it is only as we apply the principles of the cross to our daily life, that the “Marahs” of our wilderness experiences are transmuted into “waters that are made sweet.” We think of Philippians 3:10, “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.” This is our highest desire and how remarkable is the order of the scripture presentation on trees. First, the Tree is seen as the place of the curse. Second, the Tree is seen as the place where rest is found. Third, the Tree is seen as the principle motivation of our lives!

ELIM

We remember that at Elim, the Israelites had good water, and enough of it. There were twelve wells of it (Exodus 15:27). So we see that God may, for a time, order his people to encamp by the waters of Marah, yet that shall not always be their lot. Let us learn both how to be abased, and how to abound. Whatever be our lot, through this land of pilgrimage, we must remember that we are here for just a short time, and here we have no continuing city. Let us appreciate all the benefits and mercies on our behalf. Let us not murmur, but rejoice. Let us be patient through adversity, trustful, thankful. For God is ever with us.

— Bro. L. P. Davis, Jr.

(1) Editor’s note: According to Vine’s Dictionary *xulon* means “a piece of wood, or anything made of wood.” This definition helps in understanding why the New Testament sometimes uses *xulon* in place of *stauros*.

(2) Editor’s note: If the “wood” was “breccia,” calcified wood, it would be calcium oxide, which is bitter, but which will neutralize the sulfates that make Sinai-peninsula water bitter. Sinai water is rich in sulfates; sodium sulfate is “Glauber’s salt,” a strong cathartic.

Double Numbers

“Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men?” (Luke 13:4)

EIGHTEEN IN SCRIPTURE

One way to emphasize a point is by repetition. In Scripture, there are some conspicuous cases of the repetition of numbers that seem to indicate there is a spiritual point in them. One example occurs in Luke chapter 13. The text heading this article refers to eighteen people who died at the Tower of Siloam. Then only seven verses later there is mention of “a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself” (Luke 13:11, 16).

What makes this pair of mentions so notable is not only the close proximity of them, but also the absence of the number eighteen in the entire remainder of the New Testament. In all of the New Testament, this number appears only in this single chapter, in these two sequential narratives about the Tower of Siloam, and the woman bowed over with infirmity.

The lesson Jesus makes about the eighteen killed by the untimely fall of the Tower is that the ones who perished there were not worse than others, but simply part of the condemned world, which experiences accidents of this sort. By one means or another death comes to all men. “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:5). In other words, those eighteen were merely representative of the condemned race of Adam.

The woman bowed down with infirmity “could in no wise lift up herself” (Luke 13:11), and Jesus described her as one “whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years.” Jesus loosed her from this bond on the Sabbath day (verse 16). Here is a repetition, the same lesson exhibited by a different person, this time a woman, perhaps to show that both men and women are under the condemnation of Adam. None of us can in any wise lift ourselves up from this curse, incurred as a consequence of Satan’s deception of our parents in Eden.

But why this number, eighteen, associated with the cursed world? Recall that Revelation 13:18 makes a decided point of a triple six to mark the Papal beast as a sinful and foreboding system. Six is deficient, being one shy of the perfect number seven. It is used in double form in Daniel chapter three, where a gold-covered statue measured 60 cubits by 6 cubits, and here in Revelation in triple form, 600 plus 60 plus 6. The statue in Daniel probably refers in picture to the “image of the beast” from Revelation 13:14, and the 666 in Revelation applies to the full version of the beastly Papal system.

So perhaps the use of eighteen, which is also a triple six — 6 plus 6 plus 6 — is a clue that the subject of the lesson is the race of Adam which has been cursed from the beginning.

The six sons of Keturah also represent the world of mankind, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, which during the Millennium will be rescued, restored, elevated. That elevation out of the curse is represented by the children of Keturah, born to her when she was yet a concubine (1 Chronicles 1:32), becoming elevated in status when Abraham took Keturah to be a full wife after the passing of Sarah. Then her children became endowed with the full privileges incident to her elevated status — as the world will be elevated in the Kingdom.

In other words, the number six is applied to indicate that Adam’s race was cursed. And even though in the Millennium the curse will be relieved, mankind redeemed, the number continues as a reminder of their former state.

So with the triple six of Luke chapter 13, repeated for emphasis. The eighteen shows our unclean condition during the 6000 years of sin and death. But during the Millennium, when the world is lifted out of the curse, the number still applies by way of identification — that this is the class that was formerly condemned.

We find this also in the closing verse of the book of Ezekiel. Chapter 48, verses 30-35, describe the city which represents the world of mankind, restored out of the Adamic curse, and ever afterward the subject of God’s grace and favor. The measure assigned to it is conspicuous. “It was round about eighteen thousand measures: and the name of the city from that day shall be, Jehovah is there” (Ezekiel 48:35).

This, by the way, is the only use of the number eighteen in all of the 48 chapters of Ezekiel (and it does not appear in any of the remaining prophets of the Old Testament).

TWELVE IN SCRIPTURE

There is another example of repeated numbers earlier in Luke, in chapter eight. The passage begins at verse 41 with the account of Jairus, ruler of the synagogue, whose daughter was very ill, and subsequently died. Verse 42 gives her age as “about twelve years,” but Mark 6:42 removes the ambiguity — “she was of the age of twelve years.” She was his only daughter.

As Jesus turned with Jairus to attend to his emergency, a woman in the crowd came from behind and reached out to touch the edge of his garment, trusting that even a brief contact with this wonderful teacher and healer would cure a problem she had endured for twelve years. She had “spent all her living,” unsuccessfully, to cure an uncleanness of blood, but in that moment of contact she could feel within herself that her health was restored.

After an interchange with the grateful woman, word came to Jairus that his daughter had died and that he need not trouble the Master further. But Jesus had the cure even for death. He went with Jairus to his home, put out all the naysayers, took the child by her hand, and life pulsed again within her.

In each of these episodes the number twelve is specified. The problems Jesus cured were uncleanness and death. Probably the twelve is intended to identify the twelve tribes

Double Numbers

18 People at the Tower of Siloam
18 Years woman bowed over by Satan
(The condemned world, 18, triple six)

12 Year uncleanness
12 Year old child raised from death
(Israel of 12 Tribes, unclean, and under death)

of Israel, who were unclean through trespasses, or in another metaphor, dead in their sins. In this case, the two episodes in Luke chapter eight refer to **Israel**, and the two episodes in chapter thirteen refer to the **Gentiles**.

JEWS AND GENTILES

These two classes comprise the whole of mankind — quite uneven numerically, of course. But because Israel was the chosen people of God, the distinction between them and the Gentiles is a significant one. Ephesians 2:14-17 makes a point that from these two parts come a unified single entity constituting the body of Christ. “He ... hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us ... to make in himself of twain, one new man ... you which were afar off [Gentiles], and ... them that were nigh [Jews].”

Paul says the same thing with other words in Romans 4:16, “The promise [is] sure to all the seed [of Abraham]; not to that only which is of the law [Jews], but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham [who believed before he was circumcised, as Paul notes in verses 10-12, just as Gentiles believe without needing fleshly circumcision].”

TWO LAMBS

Probably this is also the point of the two lambs which constituted the daily burnt offering, that is, to represent that Christ's death would accomplish redemption for both classes, Jews and Gentiles. Those two lambs, slain daily in the Tabernacle, and thereafter in the Temple, morning and afternoon, represent Jesus who was put on the cross mid morning and died mid afternoon. Being put on the cross was necessary to redeem the Jews from the curse of the Law. But his death, by whatever means, was necessary to redeem Adam from the curse of death.

Jesus was put on the cross the third hour of the day (Mark 15:25), the same hour the holy spirit later came to the believing Jews on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:15). Jesus died for the sin of Adam at the ninth hour (Mark 15:34), the same hour of day that Cornelius later received a visitation by an angel when he was to receive salvation (Acts 10:3).

TWO WAVE LOAVES

Two wave loaves, baked with leaven, were offered on the day of Pentecost according to the Law of Moses. When it came time for the fulfillment, in calling the members of the

body of Christ, this call went out to two groups, Jews first and later Gentiles. Each one has sin inherent within them, thus the inclusion of leaven in the baked loaves. That there were two loaves suggests the two parts of the mystical body of Christ mentioned by Paul in Ephesians and Romans.

TWO PILLARS

When the Temple of God was constructed by Solomon, there were two notable pillars set upright at the front of the Temple, perhaps 30 feet or so in height, perhaps six or seven feet in circumference, hollow, about three inches thick. They were very imposing, and even names were assigned to them — Jachin, “he shall establish,” and Boaz, “in it is strength” (1 Kings 7:21).

These two pillars represented the durable strength of the temple, whose purpose was to bring people to God and reconcile them to Him. Perhaps in these two pillars — as in the two lambs, and the two loaves — we have an indication of the dual purpose of the Spiritual Temple (the Church class) that God is constructing during the Gospel Age.

That purpose is to bring both Jews and Gentiles back into accord with God. The work begins now by developing the elect from those two classes, and continues through the Millennium by bringing all remaining Jews and Gentiles into the Kingdom of God.

With this in mind, notice the dimensions of the pillars, given in cubits, in Jeremiah 52:21. “And concerning the pillars, the height of one pillar was **eighteen** cubits; and a fillet of **twelve** cubits did compass it.” Notice, eighteen — that rare number — and twelve. These are the same two numbers so conspicuously repeated in Luke. Eighteen is a symbol of the world, and twelve is a symbol of Israel, composed of 12 tribes.

— Bro. David Rice

Tyre and Sidon, Unrestrained Capitalism

“Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king: after the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as an harlot” (Isaiah 23:15).

Isaiah speaks of a period not quite two centuries future to his own day when the harlot song of Tyre would follow a period of seventy years when it would be forgotten. While in their own tongue they called themselves Canaan, Tyre and Sidon were the principle cities of Phoenicia (their Greek name).

Tyre's primacy as the economic power of the ancient world presented a continual reproach to the children of Israel.¹ Tyre was settled on the Mediterranean coast about 12 miles south of present day Beirut, and it had a citadel slightly over one mile offshore with impregnable walls. For this reason, the book of Ezekiel describes Tyre as being in the midst of the seas (Ezekiel 27:25, 26).

Tyre boasted that *it* was the original source of both Baal worship and Venus worship. Arrian writes that the temple on the island citadel of Tyre *was the most ancient of all temples within the memory of mankind* (*History*, 2, 16). Hence the Phoenician inscription reads “To our Lord, to Melkarth, the Baal of Tyre,” and was translated by the Greek (*Heraclei Archygete* — “Hercules the founder”). Tyre was consecrated to this Hercules who called for the most abominable of child sacrifice and was given the appellation “the founder” because of the ancientness of the worship. To interpret this false system of worship, Tyre was consecrated to Human Power (Hercules), and Sex (Venus).²

The relationship between Tyre and Babylon shifted and even reversed course over time. Both are designated in scripture as harlots, the language is so similar that it is easy to read the texts as referring to the same system. Reality is that even for harlots there can only be *one* chief harlot. We must recognize this, and carefully interpret the prophecies linked to Tyre and Babylon. Their interlinked fortunes under the four dominions may be summarized:

- **Babylon** was Tyre’s enemy. Nebuchadnezzar sieged the portion of the city on the mainland, but he had no navy with which to attack the island. The military force under the command of Nebuchadnezzar was to leave the prize of Tyre unclaimed after a nearly unprecedented 13 years of siege. Babylon’s unsuccessful siege caused the Lord to say to Nebuchadnezzar in Ezekiel 29:18-20, “Take Egypt in payment for your ‘Great Service’ against Tyre!” Though Babylon could not conquer Tyre, the Babylonians embargoed Tyre for their entire period of supremacy. That is, for the 70 years.

- **Medes and Persians.** Tyre was an independent ally of the Persians, and Babylon was a subject city to the Persians. Tyre and Babylon worked together. Under the Persians, there was a second siege of Babylon — this siege is not treated in the historical record of the Bible, but history recounts that it ended in Babylon’s destruction as a fortified city.

- **Greece.** Tyre was destroyed in a remarkable siege by Alexander the Great. Though Babylon was inhabited, it was a non-defendable settlement without walls and gates. The battle that ended the Persian empire was fought near to Babylon and the city was captured by Alexander almost without resistance.

- **Rome.** A small seaport was re-established at Tyre, while the small community at Babylon was beyond the borders of Rome in the Parthian empire. Both cities were shells of their former glory. The city of Baghdad now would become the center of power in Mesopotamia.

The Biblical history of the Babylonian empire, opposed to Tyre and Sidon, shows that they were bitter enemies of Nebuchadnezzar and his successors. Antitypical Tyre and Sidon employ totally different methods than antitypical Babylon, to control and traffic in the souls of men. Revelation shows Babylon and the merchants in cooperation, so this should be clarified. In this clarification, a marvelous harmony in the scriptural antitypes will be found.

TYRE AND THE FIRST CONQUEST OF BABYLON

The city of Jerusalem was critical for the Babylonians to take as they sought world domination. But the real prize of the Levant was Tyre, the wealthy, powerful city of commerce whose lines of trade carried as far as Spain.

When seventy years (Isaiah 23:15) is discussed in scripture the initial tendency is to connect it *exclusively* with Judah’s misfortunes under divine judgment, as Nebuchadnezzar brought an end to that morally bankrupt monarchy that disgraced the heritage and the promise of God’s sure mercies to their father David.

However, Babylon’s rule affected every nation of the near east. Though Babylon could not conquer Tyre, the Babylonians embargoed Tyre for the entire period of their supremacy. Hence, for seventy years, during this embargo, Tyre was forgotten. Like most embargos, the targets are crippled, but rarely destroyed.

The first conquest of Babylon by the Medes and Persians is recorded in the Book of Daniel (Daniel 5:1-31). Cyrus took the city with such stealth that as the historian Herodotus records in full accord with the Biblical account, the outskirts of the city were taken by Cyrus while the festival in the center went on in its revelry, unaware of their impending doom (*Histories*, Book 1, 193).

The book of Daniel makes no reference to smoke or burning, nor does secular history. As the remainder of the book of Daniel shows, the Medes and Persians retained even the highest administrators, such as Daniel, who were products of Babylon’s efficient civil service apparatus. With this conquest, the Persians reversed Babylon’s policy and lifted the embargo against Tyre.

The promise of Babylon being brought to judgment after the seventy years affected not only Israel but *all* the nations that Babylon conquered — “And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; *and these nations* shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations” (Jeremiah 25:11-12).

To consistently interpret any antitype we need to recognize that the seventy years of Babylonian domination of Tyre (Isaiah 23:15-17), and Judah’s seventy years when they would serve the king of Babylon (Jeremiah 25:11-12), *are one and the same historical period*. These seventy years ended when Babylon was supplanted by the Medes and Persians. Then Israel would return from captivity (Jeremiah 25:10).

BABYLON AND CYRUS IN ANTITYPE

If we are to understand the antitype of Tyre, Babylon’s enemy, we should first understand the antitype of Babylon. Pastor Russell suggests a clear identification of antitypical Babylon, nor was he alone in this Protestant interpretation:³

“The various prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel and the Apocalypse concerning Babylon are all in full accord, and manifestly refer to the same great city. And since these



Ruins of Tyre (these are Roman ruins)

prophecies had but a very limited fulfillment upon the ancient, literal city, and those of the Apocalypse were written centuries after the literal Babylon was laid in ruins, it is clear that the *special* reference of all the prophets is to something of which the ancient literal Babylon was an illustration ... As already intimated, what today is known as *Christendom* is the antitype of ancient Babylon; and therefore the solemn warnings and predictions of the prophets against Babylon — *Christendom* — are matters of deepest concern to the present generation. Would that men were wise enough to consider them!”

When the antitypical Babylon falls, the shackles of its dominion are broken by the antitypical Cyrus (Reprint 4892):

“Our race, groaning under the weaknesses and imperfections ... mental, moral and physical — longs for the promised deliverance from the bondage of sin and death. The majority of mankind undoubtedly feel the gall of their slavery, and will be glad to be free. The great Deliverer is the antitypical Cyrus. Soon he will be victorious and will establish his kingdom under the whole heaven.”

The antitypical Cyrus is identified with *our returned Lord as the great deliverer*. At the same time if *Christendom*, that is, *the Christian community of world civilization*, is the antitype of Babylon, who is this intractable and unconquerable enemy — Tyre?

Here the prophecy of Isaiah frames the answer. “Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honorable of the earth?” (Isaiah 23:8).

It is *highly unusual* in world culture for merchants to attain the status of princes. Indeed, this points to only one period in history where this has become possible — our own day. Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre? It is our Heavenly Father’s wisdom that has taken counsel against Tyre.

THE CHURCH, COMMERCE AND COMMUNISM

The antitypical interpretation of Isaiah 23:15 that seems to harmonize scripture and history (keeping in mind that we have no interpretation from the Pastor except that Tyre is part of Satan’s empire), is:

When the “seventy years” are ended — at our Lord’s Parousia in 1874 — and it becomes clear that the people can no longer be controlled through religion — “Babylon, or *Christendom*” — the next effort to maintain control of the people will be through *Commerce* — “Tyre.”

This is characterized as a “song” that is a *passionate public expression of belief*. Tyre in antitype is linked to a *commerce-driven life without the restraints of divine principles*. Some of the language seems to markedly parallel the leadership of *Christendom*:

“Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus [Tyre], Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart *is* lifted up, and thou hast said, I *am* a God, I sit *in* the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou *art* a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God” (Ezekiel 28:2).

At the time of this writing [Spring 2009] the economic leadership of the world is a much discussed topic in the G-20 summit of the major and emerging economic powers dealing with the economic crisis. Ezekiel 28:2 suggests that *very strong* central leadership eventually will emerge in the future. Going back in the history of the church we find that both Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism were *very strongly* opposed to commerce (see inset, “John Chrysostom”).

John Chrysostom

John, later surnamed “Chrysostom,” or “the golden mouth,” because of his eloquence, was born 347 AD at Antioch.⁴ He is especially important because his preaching against wealth was so genuine. Because of his earnest nature, Chrysostom was chosen to serve as the patriarch, or “chief father” of Constantinople. At this post he labored several years avoiding the temptation of exercising pride of office, vestments, and worldly conformity. In the midst of the splendors of Constantinople, “The New Rome,” he continued his ascetic habits and applied all his income to the sick and the poor.

He preached an intense, practical Christianity, boldly attacked the vices of his age, including the hollow, worldly, and hypocritical religion of the imperial court. His invectives against the vain young empress Eudoxia were to prove his undoing. He speaks as follows in his sermon “On Wealth and Poverty”:⁵

“For we are accustomed to judge poverty and affluence by the disposition of the mind, not by the measure of one’s substance. Just as we would not call a person healthy who was always thirsty, even if he enjoyed abundance, even if he lived by rivers and springs (for what is that luxuriance of water when the thirst remains unquenchable?), let us do the same in the case of wealthy people: let us never consider those people healthy who are always yearning and thirsting

after other people's property; let us not think that they enjoy any abundance. For if one cannot control his own greed, even if he has appropriated everyone's property, how can he ever be affluent? ... I beg you, remember this without fail, that not to share our own wealth with the poor is theft from the poor and deprivation of their means of life; we do not possess our own wealth but theirs. If we have this attitude, we will certainly offer our money; and by nourishing Christ in poverty here and laying up great profit hereafter, we will be able to attain the good things which are to come, by the grace and kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom (be glory, honor, and might), to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Looking at his dates, Chrysostom died over 100 years before the elevation in 539 AD of the bishop of Rome as "Pope." There existed a calloused insincerity of other members of the hierarchy, bishops, and cardinals as the church openly linked to the state during this period. Some historians argue that during this time the bishops "established a false principle of virtue."⁶ But here the historian John Lord makes an exception for Chrysostom (John Lord is cited by Pastor Russell, though not respecting Chrysostom).

At the urging of the court, Bishop Theophilus went to Chrysostom's own diocese in Chalcedon, where he held a secret council of thirty-six bishops against Chrysostom. There he procured judgment against him upon false charges of immorality, unchurchly conduct, and high treason. Chrysostom was sent into exile where he died en route (407 AD).

The issue is not to examine his sincerity or lack of sincerity, but to note the political capital made of his ministry, for the story only begins with his death. Chrysostom was venerated by the people as a saint. Thirty years after his death, by order of Theodosius II (438 AD), his bones were brought back in triumph to Constantinople. They were deposited in the imperial tomb in the Church of the Apostles. The emperor himself met the remains at Chalcedon, his "home" and the venue for Chrysostom's trial. Theodosius fell down before the coffin, and in the name of his guilty parents, Arcadius and Eudoxia, implored the forgiveness of the holy man.

Hence, we see that for antitypical Babylon, while a privileged elite held power and controlled the wealth, whatever they may have believed in private, they publicly espoused "false principles of virtue" that shunned wealth.

Early on, the church began an experiment in collective living we find in Acts 2:44-47. Chrysostom, taking the example of the primitive church in Acts, espoused a form of Communism and even sowed the seeds that would later lead

to Communism's emergence in a portion of Christendom (Russia) under the domination of the Orthodox Church — this is a well-established scholarly view.^{7,8,9} This pointed comment appears in a book entitled *The Origin of Russian Communism*, from the University of Michigan Press (Berdyayev)¹⁰ (*emphasis added*):

"St. John Chrysostom was a complete communist, though of course his was not communism of the capitalist or the industrial period. *There are good grounds for asserting that communism has Christian or Judeo-Christian origins.* But there soon came a time when Christianity was adapted to the contemporary kingdom of Caesar."

Chrysostom held sway in the Orthodox Church long after his death, but he also had influence in the West. He was one of the few Eastern fathers whose translated works were read even in the Church of Rome. Within Europe under the Popes, banking, money lending, and other necessities for the emergence of a commercial sector were held in such abhorrence that no Christian was permitted to engage in them. Because they nonetheless became a necessity with time, the solution was to force the despised Jews to take up these occupations.

So, historically, commerce was opposed by *antitypical* Babylon, the enemy of Tyre when Babylon dominated. Along with the apparently sincere concerns for the welfare of the poor, came the bondage to church discipline and dogma for which Chrysostom deserves censure. History shows that the middle class is the breeding ground for revolutionary leaders, the merchant class, and commerce. Hence, opposing the growth of a middle class is a method of retaining power.¹¹

— Bro. Richard Doctor (to be continued)

(1) Please see, "Tyre & Sidon," *Beauties of the Truth*, 18:2 (May 2007).

(2) The city of Tyre was consecrated to Hercules (Melkarth), a "Baal" or "Lord" (Quintus Curtius, 4:2; Strabo, 16:757)

(3) Russell, Charles T., *The Battle of Armageddon* (originally published 1897), Study 2, "The Doom of Babylon — Christendom," page 23.

(4) McClintock & Strong's Cyclopaedia, Chrysostom.

(5) Fitzgerald, Brian Ephrem, "St. John Chrysostom on Wealth and Poverty — A Thematic Study of St. John Chrysostom's Sermons on Luke 16: 19-31," at St. Philip's Antiochian Orthodox Church, Souderton, PA (March 2002).

(6) *op. cit.*, *Studies in the Scriptures*, Volume 2, page 286; citing from John Lord, *The Old Roman World: The Grandeur and Failure of Its Civilization*, C. Scribner and Co. (1873) page 411, page 209.

(7) Toynbee, Arnold J., *Civilization on Trial: Essays*, Oxford University Press (1948), page 182. *These references on Chrysostom are typical and far from exhaustive.*

(8) Gordon, Barry L., *The Economic Problem in Biblical and Patristic Thought*, Brill (1989), ISBN 9004090487, page.101.

(9) Von Mises, Ludwig, *Socialism: An Economic and Sociological Analysis*, Yale University Press (1951), page 424-425.

(10) Berdyayev, Nicolas, R.M. French, *The Origin of Russian Communism*, University of Michigan Press (1960), ISBN 0472060341, page 171.

(11) *op. cit.*, *Studies in the Scriptures*, Volume 2, page 57.